

FIREBREAK
Georgia Practice Job Sheet-394

Prepared for: _____

Prepared by: _____

Farm: _____ Tract Number: _____ Date: _____



Definition

Any natural or constructed barrier that contain fires within an area that typically are established by plowing and/or harrowing to stops and controls the spread of fire or provides a control line from which to control a fire.

Resource Concerns

Firebreaks help protect soil, water, air, plant, animal, and human resources by preventing the spread of wildfire or controlling prescribed fires.

PURPOSE

- Reduce the spread of wildfire.
- Contain prescribed burns.

General Criteria Applicable to All Purposes

Firebreaks may be temporary or permanent and shall consist of fire-resistant vegetation, non-flammable materials, bare ground, or a

combination of these. Firebreaks will be of sufficient width and length to contain the expected fire behavior (minimum of 6 feet wide). Firebreaks shall be located to minimize risk to the resources being protected, including locating on the contour where practical to minimize risk of soil erosion. Erosion control measures, such as waterbars, turn-out ditches, seeding/vegetation/mulching, etc. shall be installed to prevent sediment from leaving the site. Install waterbars and water turnouts at approaches to streams, roads and gullies.

Specific Criteria for Vegetated Firebreaks

Firebreaks can be constructed by bulldozing, plowing or disking and then vegetated to either perennial grasses or annual grasses and legumes. Vegetated firebreaks may be over seeded each fall with legumes, small grains, or ryegrass.

Vegetated firebreaks should be at least 10 feet wide and may be used for access. Vegetated firebreaks should be limed and fertilized periodically and reseeded when necessary.

Specific Criteria for Disked Firebreaks

Either plowed or disked firebreaks can be constructed with a variety of equipment. The desired result is a bare area at least 6 feet wide, free of burnable material, and located so that erosion is kept to a minimum. Plowed or disked firebreaks should be limited to areas with slight erosion hazard. Firebreaks should be either plowed or disked to remove all burnable material before the fire season or planted prescribed burn.

Specific Criteria for Natural Firebreaks

These are natural barriers that prohibit the fire from crossing into areas where fire is not planned. Such areas include: lakes, streams, ponds, roads, cultivated fields and railroads.

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

This practice applies on all land uses where protection from wildfire is needed or prescribed burning is applied.

CONSIDERATIONS

When using barriers consider the effects on wildlife and fisheries. Attempt to locate firebreaks near ridge crests and valley bottoms. If winds are predictable, firebreaks should be located perpendicular to the wind and on the windward side of the area to be protected. Consider the selection of

plant species that will enhance the needs of wildlife in the area. Locate on the contour where practicable to minimize risk of soil erosion.

Design and layout should include multiple uses. Consider the beneficial and other effects of installation of the firebreak on cultural resources and threatened and endangered species, natural areas, riparian areas and wetlands.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Specifications for applying this practice shall be prepared for each site and recorded using approved specification sheets, job sheets, technical notes, and narrative statements in the conservation plan and the burn plan, or other acceptable documentation.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Mow, disk, or graze vegetative firebreaks to avoid a build-up of excess litter and to control weeds. Treatment should be timed to reduce impacts to nesting when possible. Inspect all firebreaks for woody materials such as live trees, dead limbs or blown down trees and remove them from the firebreak. Inspect firebreaks at least annually and rework bare ground firebreaks as necessary to keep them clear of flammable vegetation. Repair erosion control measures as necessary to ensure proper function.

Access by vehicles or people will be controlled to prevent damage. Bare ground firebreaks, which are no longer needed, will be stabilized.

Certification Job Sheet:

Prepared by: _____

Title: _____ Date: _____

Approved by: _____

Title: _____ Date: _____

Installation:

- List the type of firebreak constructed for payment (disk, plowed, or vegetative)
_____?
- Are disked firebreaks constructed at a minimum width of 6 feet?
Circle Yes or No
- Are water control structure (waterbars, turnouts) placed on firebreaks where necessary?
Circle Yes or No
- Are vegetative firebreak constructed at a minimum of 10 feet in width?
Circle Yes or No/NA

This practice was completed and meets NRCS standards and specifications.

Circle YES or NO

Certification by: _____

Date: _____

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